

I am an old man with barely a tooth and receding gums.
I would make a poor meal.

ah, it is true, he said sadly,
without teeth the tendons are tough.
I would much rather have a tender child,
with his teeth still in the gum.

then you will not eat me? I quavered.

oh but I must, said the dragon;
after all,
a tooth in the mouth is worth two in the gum.

then I awoke,
crossing the bridge to reality.

-- Victor Lazarow

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

SIX YEARS OF AGE

My father is the King
Of Silence. He floats on a throne
Of smoke, pale blue messages, like
Serpents, issue from
Between his closed lips.

The room is tall, with
A single huge table placed directly
At its center. From the
Floor to the ceiling, each wall is
Panelled with darkest oak.

In the room adjoining, my
Mother and sister, the Queen and
Princess, languidly perform their
Evening ablutions. There
Are no slaves in the house.

From a large box in one
Corner, bombastic and melodious by
Turns, music and voices alternately
Foam and chuckle. My father
Lifts his eye in amusement.

At the table in the center
Of the room, alone save for the small
Utensils of my art, I sit
In easy concentration, making designs
With colored sand on paper.

Soon the clock on the mantle
Will strike an indeterminate number
In an endless sequence of notes,
And I shall rise from my chair.
Many kisses shall precede me to bed.

How THE FOOTBALL Was BORN

An elephant in swimming trunks
Was flying through the dark
Carrying the Earth on his back.

When he got to the edge of the
Ocean, he stopped, leaned over
And yelled down to the Chinese
Gatekeeper who thrives inside
The boiling core of Everybody's
Mind. "Hey, give me a hand with
This tomato, will you?" And the
Chinaman, himself not unfamiliar
With childhood, and believing all
The while it was a balloon, blew
It up to its present size, the

Shape of which resembles his eyes.

-- Ken Dobel

Santa Rosa, California

the ladies still don't care

the whole thing is over,
bastards, I've been
banging the walls for 3 days and 4 nights
chained in the corner of the room
in my own
hardened jism.
I can't get out to pay the rent
or buy a paper.
somebody drunk upstairs
has been playing the